

## Talking Points

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*As part of Tompkins County's outreach efforts, we ask that you speak with the members of our community about the Census. To help you communicate about the benefits of the 2010 Census, the census process and the importance of mailing back a form, we created the following talking points. Please use them to help spark conversation and enthusiasm.*

### Importance of the 2010 Census

- The census helps paint a portrait of America by showing how the country evolved over the past 10 years and what America needs for the next 10 years.
- The 2010 Census is more than just a population count. It's about the future and well-being of our community and country.
- Census data are used to reapportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and for the subsequent redistricting of state and local governments.
- Census data help to determine how more than \$400 billion per year in federal funding is distributed to tribal, state and local governments for important social services that affect local communities like ours.
- Census data can help fund services for people in poverty, establish facilities for people with disabilities, determine locations for hospitals and senior centers, and forecast transportation needs, such as new roads and public transit options.

### Explaining the Census Process

- Everyone in the United States must be counted. This includes people of all ages, races, ethnic groups; citizens and noncitizens.
- Census forms will be delivered or mailed to households in March 2010.
- Households should complete and mail back their forms upon receipt. Remember, we can't move forward until you mail it back.
- Census Day is April 1, 2010. Responses to the census form should include everyone who will be living at your address on that date. (It is not necessary to wait until Census Day to return census forms, however. Forms should be returned as quickly as possible.) People should be counted at the residence where they live or sleep most of the time.
- The individual in whose name the housing unit is rented or owned should complete the form on behalf of every person living in the residence, both relatives and nonrelatives.
- Census workers will visit households that do not return forms to take the count in person.

#### Importance of Mailing Back a Census Form

- Completing and mailing back a form is the easiest and most efficient method of participating in the 2010 Census.
- One of the shortest census forms in history, the 2010 Census form asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete.
- The Census Bureau has challenged everyone in the United States to top the Census 2000 mail participation rate of 72 percent, which was the national rate as of the April 2000 cut-off.
- High mail participation rates reduce the number of census workers who must go door-to-door to collect census data.
- Mailing back your form is important because about \$85 million is saved for every one percent increase in mail participation.
- Additionally, the Census Bureau saves \$60-\$70 per census form returned by mail.
- Filling out your form and mailing it back will help ensure a more accurate count.
- Participation is easy, important and safe.